**Section 4: Preceptor-Approved Project Focus**

**Improving the staffing grid for ortho/spine/neuroscience: minimizing charge nurse in staffing and onboarding of new residents.**

As healthcare continues to evolve new challenges also evolve. On the ortho/spine/neuroscience unit staffing has become a central focus for leadership. In a time when nursing shortages are common new thinking must be implemented to meet these needs. The unit is struggling to meet staffing needs without utilizing the charge nurse in staffing. When the charge nurse is utilized in staffing their responsibilities are increased. While ensuring proper management of the unit they are also required to take perform patient care. This added job function can lead to burnout, mistakes, and declined patient outcomes. At this facility staffing is focused on patient outcomes and ratio driven.

The staffing grid should be examined from multiple angles as one size does not fit all. Ensuring proper staffing is essential for nurse safety, patient safety and improved outcomes.The effects of low nursing staff have shown to directly relate to patient outcomes. There are six major staffing strategies used: professional judgement, benchmarking, volume-based, patient prototype, multi-factorial indicator, and timed-task (Griffiths et al., 2020). The use of MATRIX staffing allows for maximizing nursing care without a decrease in patient satisfaction or outcomes (Riley et al., 2021). MATRIX nursing provides an accurate balance of nurse-to-patient ratio removing the charge nurse from staffing.

Examining the staffing grid from multiple angles also includes onboarding of new residents to the unit. Nursing leaders must determine and evaluate if residency programs are a beneficial investment to the organization. The potential return on investment into the residency program could significantly impact the staffing grid. The one-year retention rate of residency nurses increases 74% to 100%. Some studies have shown that successful residency programs produce less than 10% turnover rate (Asber, 2019). More staff such as residents provides a short-term solution, but with proper execution provides lasting results. When adding these residents to the staffing grid experience and skill level must be considered (Saville et al., 2019).

**References**

Asber, S. R. (2019). Retention outcomes of new graduate nurse residency programs: An integrative review. JONA: The Journal of Nursing Administration, 49(9), 430-435.

Griffiths, P., Saville, C., Ball, J., Jones, J., Pattison, N., Monks, T., & Safer Nursing Care Study Group. (2020). Nursing workload, nurse staffing methodologies and tools: A systematic scoping review and discussion. International Journal of Nursing Studies, 103, 103487.

Riley, Y., Stitt, J., Hill, C. M., Stutzman, S. E., Venkatachalam, A. M., Aguilera, V., &Ifejika, N. L. (2021). Implementation of the MATRIX staffing grid improves nurse satisfaction with rehabilitation unit staffing. Journal of Neuroscience Nursing, 53(4), 183-187.

Saville, C. E., Griffiths, P., Ball, J. E., & Monks, T. (2019). How many nurses do we need? A review and discussion of operational research techniques applied to nurse staffing. International journal of nursing studies, 97, 7-13. Saville, C. E., Griffiths, P., Ball, J. E., & Monks, T. (2019). How many nurses do we need? A review and discussion of operational research techniques applied to nurse staffing. International journal of nursing studies, 97, 7-13.